

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, KS

SUBJECT: HAHM PYONG-CHOON INTERVIEW

1. TONGA ILBO JULY 9 PUBLISHED INTERVIEW WITH AMBASSADOR HAHM PYONG-CHOON, WHO IS IN SEOUL FOR CHIEFS OF MISSION CONFERENCE. GIST OF HAHM'S COMMENTS ON ROK FOREIGN POLICY AND US-KOREAN RELATIONS FOLLOWS.

2. ROK FOREIGN POLICY: PRIMARY AIM OF MISSION CHIEFS' CONFERENCE IS TO PREVENT ONE-WAY OPEN DOOR TO NORTH KOREA. DESPITE JUNE 23 STATEMENT, USSR AND EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES KEEP THEIR DOORS CLOSED TO ROK AND WE THINK IT IS AGAINST PRINCIPLE OF RECIPROCITY FOR OUR ALLIES TO ONE-SIDEDLY OPEN DOORS TO NORTH KOREA.

3. US-NORTH KOREAN CONTACTS: US WILL NEVER OPEN DOOR TO NORTH KOREA WHILE NORTH'S COMMUNIST ALLIES REMAIN CLOSED TO ROK. MOREOVER, IT IS "ALMOST INCONCEIVABLE" FOR US TO APPROACH NORTH KOREA WITHOUT PRIOR CONSULTATION WITH ROK.

R. US REACTION TO JUNE 28 INCIDENT: USG AND PUBLIC ALIKE WERE "STUNNED" OVER NORTH KOREAN ACTION THEY COULDN'T UNDERSTAND WHY NORTH HAD TO USE FORCE

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BEFORE TRYING SOME OTHER MEANS. THEY THINK

THERE IS LITTLE HOPE IN SOUTH-NORTH DIALOGUE IF NORTH BEHAVES THIS WAY.

5. US FORCES IN KOREA: THERE IS WIDE GAP IN VIEWS OF US ADMINISTRATION AND CONGRESS. IN VIEW OF NOVEMBER ELECTION, THERE ARE SOME UNREASONABLE ARGUMENTS FAVORING WITHDRAWAL OF US FORCES FROM KOREA. HOWEVER, US ADMINISTRATION HOLDS VIEW THAT STABILITY OF NORTH ASIA IS VITAL TO SECURITY OF US AND AMERICAN MILITARY PRESENCE IN KOREA IS IMPORTANT STRATEGICALLY, AS SECURITY OF KOREA IS DIRECTLY CONNECTED TO STABILITY OF NORTH ASIA. THERE IS NO PLAN TO CUT US TROOPS IN KOREA DURING FY 75. AFTER ALL, NOTHING COUNTS MORE THAN ROK'S OWN CAPABILITY IN CHECKING NORTH KOREA.

6. UN STRATEGY; SPECIFIC STRATEGY FOR UNGA IS CLASSIFIED BUT THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ROKG AND USG ON THIS ISSUE AND WE HAVE GOOD COORDINATION.

7. CRITICISM OF ROK WITHIN US: SOME PAPERS ARE CARRYING ARTICLES CRITICAL OF ROKG. IT SHOULD BE NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT SOURCES OF THESE ARTICLES ARE NONE OTHER THAN KOREANS. I HEAR THERE ARE EVEN KOREANS WHO APPROACH AMERICAN REPORTERS ASKING THEM TO APPLY PRESSURE BY WRITING ARTICLES CRITICAL OF ROKG. WE SHOULD KNOW THAT THERE ARE THINGS THAT ARE SUPPOSED TO BE DISCUSSED AMONG US KOREANS AND NOT WITH FOREIGNERS. HABIB

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